/195 cont./

682 Upper La Guajira who arrived in Uribia suffering from measles and asked for hospitality in the house of a friend of hers of the well-to-do class. This friend, the owner of the house, could not deny her request and as a result caught the measles and died. The family of the dead woman demanded a very high compensation payment from the woman who brought the disease.

One must also consider the homicide caused, according to the Guajiro mentality by the breaking of a taboo. The Guajiro woman during her periods of pregnancy and menstruation, the murderer, and the participants in funeral rites are at all times bearers of a malignant magic power that can infect, hurt, or kill young children and people seriously ill. If one of these tabooed people presents himself at a house where there is one of those liable to this evil influence, and this person dies within a period such that it can be presumed that the death was the result of the transgression of the taboo, his maternal relatives declare the tabooed person guilty of the death or illness of the child when this occurs, or of the seriousness of the sickness in question.

682 When a Guajiro's death is caused by a white, that is, by an
648 individual who does not belong to the community, the idea of blame is governed by the norms just set forth. At the present time they generally submit /196/ to Guajiro law as the punitive form, but customarily in the peninsula, one of these deaths is paid for by the death of three civilizados /nonnatives/, since many Indians still believe that every civilizado is part of a homogeneous consanguineous family group. Others know this is not so, but nevertheless the death of an Indian by a white gives rise to strong reprisals and even to the death of the white man. If the murderer remains in the peninsula territory or near it, it is almost certain that he will be killed tragically by some relative of the murdered man, who will wait, although already well paid, for some suitable occasion to kill him.

685 Other kinds of aggressive acts are those involved in the theft of food, livestock, and personal belongings.

The first two are the most common in the peninsula, to the point that some authors and travelers have considered theft to be

/196 cont./

685 a peculiar characteristic of the Guajiro Indian. They steal from the time they are children, since the scarcity of food in La Guajira makes the child steal food from his younger brother, from his relatives, and from outsiders; and he eats it immediately or takes it away and hides it in the woods to use when it is possible and convenient to his need.

This means that they are punished when they steal food from their own homes and praised when they steal it from outsiders. Even men frequently steal from the sown fields at night, and there is hardly a stock breeder who does not have to exercise scrupulous vigilance over his livestock day and night to avoid being the victim of thieves. At night the livestock must be shut up in well-fenced corrals, annexed to the houses, but even so they are frequently stolen. During the day the flocks are never allowed to pasture without someone looking after them. The Guajiro knows and can distinguish from others the tracks of his animals, which permits him to track them over long distances, helped by the sandy soil, until he finds where they are. The tracker follows the thief until he finds him, and if he discovers him with the stolen animal it is not unusual for him to kill him. If he knows who the thief is, he goes at once to this man's closest relatives, demanding indemnity, which they will certainly pay, because if they do not, the wronged man will take advantage of any opportunity to recuperate his loss and damages by his own hand.

[787] When they wish to know who the rustler is, they frequently have recourse to the diviner, who takes a cigarette, a wand, or a firebrand, according to his speciality, and lights it. In the wisps of smoke and in the way the flame consumes the burning article, he believes that he can find, after long observation, the thief and the place where the stolen thing can be found. /197/

When they recover an important object, the family that had lost it give a small feast in which an animal is slaughtered to [533] [535] divide among attending friends; chicha and rum are drunk, and a drum is beaten with the monotonous, prolonged rhythm to which they dance the chicha maya for several nights.

/197 cont./

[685] The punishments which the Guajiro establish to punish crimes against property are varied and very elastic in their application, since it depends on the standing and strength of those concerned.

We have seen how the first reaction when a thief is discovered is to kill him, in spite of the consequences it can bring. If they do not kill him at once, they follow a curious magic process aimed at the same end: to contrive the thief's death. "This is why when they recover a cow or an animal that had been stolen from [789] them, or it reappears, they cut its hair and bury it up to its neck; the owners surround it and cry as if they were at a wake; they insult and curse the thief, reinforcing their actions with explosions of gunpowder, which they mix with ashes and the hair of the stolen animal. In this way they believe they will cause the death of the thief (1)."

1. Jahn, Alfred. Los Aborígenes del Occidente de Venezuela, page 187.

Guajiro law stipulates as indemnity for the theft of an object or an animal, double or sometimes three times the value of the stolen item. Generally it is double, to pay for what was stolen and indemnification for damages. But the application of the law exceeds this at times, particularly when it is made effective on unprotected groups, in which case it has on occasion gone as high as ten times the value of what was stolen and even the elimination of the thief's family, leaving them in abject misery because they took away all their herds, as happens in Jarara. In this region, which is dryer than the rest of the peninsula and consequently lacking in agricultural resources, the whole economic life is centered around stock raising, which provides food and in olden times helped to provide clothing. If the thief is punished by taking away his livestock, he is by that act reduced to the margin of the social collectivity, since he finds himself obliged to emigrate as he has no other means of livelihood. When he emigrates he abandons his lands, which his enemies take. These

/197 cont./

685 groups left destitute by the application of the law governing theft join others, impoverished by the summer /droughts/ for example, and form the social part of the community which is easily forced into bond service by the stronger groups. (Cf. Chap. Slavery and Bond Service.)

203 691 Informer. In La Guajira the informer acquires the character of an institution which helps to maintain the regimen for social stability in /198/ the peninsula. This individual -- man or woman -- busies himself bringing to members of any family group news of an infraction of any legal precept which affects them and which has not been done in their presence. For instance, if the name of a dead man was spoken, if a joke was made about him, if someone stepped on his grave, etc., the informer carries the news to the interested parties, so that when the indemnity is paid for the aggressive act, he as informer will get his share. When two family groups find themselves enemies through the violation by one of the sides of some section of the regimen for social stability, they are very careful not to comment about the case in front of outsiders, because the news, misrepresented, may be taken to the opposite side, obstructing at times the legal work of the arbitrator and causing an open struggle between the two sides. The informer wants to have the right to a part when the distribution of the indemnity is carried out.

Where the action of the informer is most noticeable is in the case of a constant struggle among various co-wives. He takes advantage of this situation of mutual rancor, bringing and taking news of the movements of their husband from one to the other, etc., to obtain a remuneration for his services.

The informer defends his position, participating directly but without getting himself involved in the legal infraction against the family group to whom he reports. Later he justifies his right to receive indemnity by asserting that he too has suffered pain, has shed tears for example, when the offense has led to the death of a person, and he served as a mourner during the ceremony which followed the death.

[153 cont.]

182 *756 e) Defense of the community and the individual from the harmful influence of evil spirits, an influence which largely expresses itself in personal and communal illnesses.

554 *756 In exchange for all these services given by the shaman, the community offers him as payment, on one hand, their backing, respect, admiration, and even fear, and on the other hand, material goods which consolidate his status of privilege, such as necklaces, cloth, jewels in general, animals, and money.

• • •

182 741 [154] In accordance with the previously established division between magic and the foretelling of the future in Chapter IV, we should now state that the diviner, like the shaman, serves to maintain, defend, and restore the regimen for individual security and collective stability, an affirmation which we have based on the following functions which he performs:

a) Discovery through divination of the causes of illnesses, thus permitting the prescribing of adequate medication, with great probability of success for the patient, who is generally a child.

[685] b) Also through divination the restoration of lost objects and the discovery of the thief — factor in the breaking of the regimen for personal security — so that the thief may suffer the penalties with which society punishes those who violate the cultural norms concerning personal property.

[787] c) Divination by which, when husbands are absent from home, their state of health can be ascertained and their wives can provide them with rapid and effective help.

d) Determination, in the last instance, of a novice's "vocation" or lack of "vocation" in the science of shamanism, a decision which is of great importance for the community in general, since on it depends whether the community has in its future magician a defender of its regimen for stability, a counselor and spiritual director, or, on the contrary, a charlatan on whom the protector spirits have not descended to illuminate him and who

7:Bollinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

applies mainly to children. These then become slave-workers and by right should be liberated once they have paid off with their work the sum for which they were bought, but that may not always be done. It is the mother, the uncle or the aunts who decide when a child is to be sold. This seems cruel to us now, yet it is not so long ago that children in the country were auctioned as workers in Sweden and elsewhere.

The owner of these slave-workers is bound to provide them with food and clothing as he must his slaves; thus children sold into slavery at least do not starve to death as they well might at home.

An Indian who has been unable to pay his debts must in certain circumstances go and serve his creditor. That is reminiscent of our own ancient slavery for debt. The obligation to work for another can also be a punishment laid upon a thief or a robber. As long as the slave-worker's clan is able to take action against the master if he goes beyond his entitlement, the position of the slave-worker is different from that of the slave; but if his clan is weak and unable to help him, he can be utterly in his master's power. At times a whole clan may become so weak that it has to seek the support of a stronger clan, and thereby becomes bound to work for the latter and is entirely dependent upon it.

While the master of a female slave may use her as he will, he has no right to have intercourse with a female slave-worker. Nor can he prevent others from entering into relations with her. If her clan has any voice in affairs, it will require damages of anyone who seduces her; but if her clan is powerless, then the female slave-worker is without support either of her clan or her master, and not infrequently ends as a prostitute. Prostitution is contrary to Indian law, but nowadays it does exist.

Even if a girl's clan is insignificant it will always demand damages, if someone has had relations with the girl and made her pregnant. Usually the man will pay up, that being the decent thing to do. Perhaps he wishes to marry the girl; in that case he must first pay her master the debt

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

Francisco's blood was slightly mixed, but, of course, he followed his Indian mother's clan and bore the name Ipuana. This clan's symbol is the hawk. Francisco was married and his wife belonged to the Dog clan, Jayariyú Their children were thus called Jayariyú, and Francisco was not even of the same family, though no one doubted his paternity.

Francisco served us well on our journeys. He was not especially quick-witted, but he was certainly not a simpleton. He suited us well in Guajira, for he knew both the country and the people; later, when we came to parts that he did not know, he was a little out of his depth.

Francisco's wife, Anita—the nuns had called her that—used to help my wife in our hut, and glad we were to have her, for primitive housekeeping involves much hard labour. Anita had a sweet young sister, who had not yet acquired a christian name. She was called Chinca. She had no real business in our hut, but she used to come sometimes and lounge in the doorway, looking rather fetching. We noticed, however, that after each of Chinca's visits something was missing. These were not valuable things, it is true, for we did not leave those lying about, but match boxes used to disappear and occasional packets of oatmeal. Although we still had plenty of the latter and Chinca was good to look at and welcome to stand in our doorway—we thought we would teach her not to steal. We filled an empty oatmeal packet with hay and sand and laid it conveniently within reach. Chinca came and went again, and the packet went too. A few minutes later Chinca came rushing back, flung the packet on to the floor and cursed us up hill and down dale in her own expressive tongue. We could not help roaring with laughter; a thief who goes back to those he has robbed and curses them because the stolen goods have not been to his liking! Anita begged our forgiveness on her sister's behalf:

'After all, she is a heathen and does not know better.'

'And you, Anita, do you never steal?'

'Not now. I am Christian. But when I was a heathen, ah! then I stole such a lot.'

7:Belinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

115 And her eyes shone at the recollection of the now for-
●685 bidden pleasures of her girlhood.

When I went on trips in the surrounding country I
124 usually had Francisco with me and often my wife. Anita had then to be ready to feed us when we came home, whether it were the same day, or the next, or three days later. In such things Indian women have patience. They know how to wait, and they are never surprised.

We began our exploration of the brown hills and green
124 valleys of Macuira with a long trip on foot. Laboriously
556 we waded through the fine sand. This is almost firm when it is damp, but it was then the dry season and the sand was loose. We were going to visit relatives of Francisco, simple people, but not actually poor. To us who had already had a certain amount to do with Indians, it was a surprise to find ourselves dealing in such categories as 'rich', 'poor', 'well-to-do', etc., just as though we were concerned with white people. Among all other Indians the difference in economic status between individuals had been relatively insignificant, as, presumably, it had been among the Guajiro before they took to herding cattle.

133 The Indians we were to visit lived in a beautiful place, just on the fringe of a watered valley between purple brown heights, with the peak of Ituhor dominating the landscape. The valley was like a green Bengal fire against its parched
34a background. There were two huts, built of cactus wood and with roofs of the same material. They were saddle-backed and linked by a wall, which acted as a shield against the wind, that there always blows in the same direction. In front of this wall, that is between the two houses, were the
[41] fires. Round about were shelves covered with grass and erected on four poles. The Creoles call these *trojas*. You can sit under them and be out of the sun, and cooking utensils and stores can be kept on them out of reach of animals.
[35a] Here and there were hammocks stretched between poles stuck in the ground, and there were other poles used in the all but daily butchering of a goat or sheep. Round these there were dark patches on the ground.

123 Having Francisco with us we were naturally well re-
352

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

idea being that to speak the name renews the grief of the dead person's relatives. An old man of the Uriana clan, who called himself Juan, died. Some time later some of his relatives were at an entertainment, at which too was a woman of the Jusuá clan with her little son. A Creole asked this woman what her little boy was called and without thinking, she replied: 'Juan'. The dead man's relatives then claimed damages because she had mentioned the dead man's name, and she had to pay them a bullock, even though it was a Spanish name. It was the reminder of their grief that had to be compensated. It is also an offence to tread on an Indian's grave.

It is more expensive to strike a person than to insult him. One should not answer an insult with a blow, but a well-to-do Indian will not infrequently do so and gladly pay the damages. If an Indian strikes another without hurting him, he must pay nonetheless, because he has treated the other as a slave—it being only one's own slaves that one has the right to strike. If anyone tears a tunic, he must not only replace it, but pay for the shame the other felt at going about in rags.

A thief, if caught, must repay several times the value of what he has stolen. Not infrequently he must pay with his life, especially if the person he has robbed is a powerful personage, as he usually is, and the thief belongs to a weak clan that cannot help his family to exact blood-money.

A thief can be forced to pay by working for his victim. He becomes a debtor-slave. Murder, manslaughter and being the cause of another's death are the most serious crimes. They do not have these actual categories. The penalty for manslaughter is very heavy; if agreement cannot be reached on it, it can sometimes lead to war, a war in which the enemy must either be exterminated or enslaved.

It is on such occasions that a purchi is held, at which you can see the groups of warriors drawn up facing each other, while a chief presides.

The chief is a mighty person and will have been chosen for his excellent qualities, yet he is not a judge, but rather advocate and mediator. His role is as conciliator. He will

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

numerous and worse-armed companies and take what they have. The various bands, however, have no mutual respect or consideration, but will plunder each other if they can. Perhaps a Guajiro with a relation among the attackers can count on some consideration, unless his relative is inimical. However, the Guajiro do sometimes do business with the Cusina, and also can negotiate and secure the return of stolen animals. The Cusina's haunt is the Cojoro Hills and a narrow strip of the lowland is also accounted theirs.' He then named the leaders of that time and told where they and their men were. In those days the Cusina had a number of plantations in the lowland, and also cattle, though they could not be bothered to look after these, but preferred to live by banditry. Simmons also says that it was the Cusina who sold the poisoned arrows.

Nearly forty years had passed since Simmons had journeyed in those parts and it was obvious that the Cusina were no longer so numerous nor so dominant, though one still had to take heed of them and be on one's guard. We were to learn that they could still make daring raids to parts far from their haunts. All unattached Indians one met in the vicinity of the hills were held to be Cusina—it was safest so.

Attack and highway robbery was one thing, ordinary theft another. If a thief was caught, it cost him dear in compensation, but theft itself, as we heard in connection with Chinca, was almost regarded as a sport. It was thus common for poor Indians at least to pinch things from those who were better off. We, of course, were considered very rich.

It was not to be wondered at if an Indian, having nothing to eat during the worst of the drought, appropriated a bit of this and that from those who were better off. If he knew that he would be able to repay it, it became a sort of loan, without the owner's permission.

Once, some Indians got in ahead of the monks when the time came to harvest the manioc at the mission's plantation in Macuira. When the monks came there with the mission's children to carry it home, all had gone. In the hope of preventing this happening again, the monks decided to com-

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

plain to the civil authorities; but the government inspector at the coast just smiled and shook his head when they asked if he could do anything about it.

'The only advice I can give you is that you double your plantation next year. Then perhaps the crop will suffice both for you and the Indians.'

When a monk once reproached an Indian who worked at the mission for pilfering sugar, the Indian replied: 'But, father, every Indian steals!'

As Simmons thought, the Cusina are made up of the bad elements, those outcast from their clans. In the long run no clan can shield a member who commits all sorts of crimes. Some flee to the hills because they cannot pay compensation for someone they have killed, nor count on help from their clan, which perhaps is also without resources. Such people are real outcasts, for anyone can kill them without risk of their clan's exacting vengeance. These outcasts once took refuge in the most desolate hills of the peninsula, Sierra de Cusina, and ever since others have come to replenish their ranks. It was said that they also had women, either captured or runaways. Grazing and water were said to be scarce there. It was a desolate part and none disputed it with the Cusina. They had to live largely by plunder and robbery. They could only keep goats in their hills, so what cattle they rustled, they ate. They were keen to get arms. We were told that none then alive had ever seen a Cusina. They attacked by night and killed everyone. That, of course, was the old Guajiro way: let no one live who might conceivably exact vengeance.

The old accounts from the days of the conquest also mention Cusina, but they must have meant ordinary Guajiro Indians from the area of the Cusina Hills.

The brigands were supposed to have scouts out on the roads, who signalled to their comrades when they scented prey. They very seldom dared attack a well-armed company, as ours was. We three white people each had a gun or rifle and a pistol; and in reserve we had some of my cheap barter pistols. We equipped Francisco with a saloon pistol which had a long barrel and looked impressive. Then we